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A D D R E S S  
T O T H E  
Representatives of the People.



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AN  
ADDRESS  
TO THE  
REPRESENTATIVES  
OF THE  
PEOPLE;  
UPON  
SUBJECTS, IMPORTANT, and INTERESTING,  
TO THE  
Kingdom of IRELAND.

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BY A FREEHOLDER.

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A N

# A D D R E S S

T O T H E

Representatives of the People.

G E N T L E M E N,

**W**ITH patient attention, I observe the actions of men, never having had any other intention, than from their virtues and vices, to amend my own life, and to pass in silence to the grave. ——— But unexpectedly, I am led to offer some reflections upon the fashion of the times, and the pursuits of the nation; not from any desire I have to dub myself an author, as is plain, from this letter being anonymous; but for a much more honourable reason ——— because I think it the duty of every man to offer his sentiments, when upon mature reflection, he thinks the measures pursued, tend to injure his country. ——— The subject which I shall lay before you, strikes me as being  
B important,



important, and however inelegantly I may handle it, I hope the thought and attention which I have given to it, and the consequences it will exhibit, will plead my excuse.

And when we look around to examine who has it most in their power to promote the happiness of this country, you cannot wonder that this letter is addressed to you, as being the REPRESENTATIVES and GUARDIANS of the people.

With conscious gratitude, I reflect as an individual in behalf of the whole, on the many and repeated testimonies which you have given to encourage the industry, and to promote the happiness of the people you represent; by the many sums of money which you have granted from time to time to publick undertakings; and I am perfectly convinced, that those grants have been made with the kindest intentions.

Whether all the informations which have been laid before you and the publick to excite your benevolence to the different objects, have been accompanied with that candour which you had a right to expect, I shall not now inquire; but whether *all* those objects which have shared your encouragement, are *advantageous* to the kingdom, seems worthy of examination.

This field will immediately strike you, Gentlemen, as being very fruitful, affording large space for enquiry; and claims an accuracy of investigation, which might lead an abler pen into a much larger work than this is intended to be:— but I propose to be short:— A few axioms will lay the foundation of the present enquiry.



1st. "It

1st. "It is not the *number* of people that is the glory of a state, but the *judicious employment* of them.—The knowing what employments are most beneficial to the publick good, is a matter of the *first* consequence."

2d. "In a round of different professions, *all* must either *absolutely* or *relatively* depend upon each other, and some among them will be of that *general importance*, as in a great measure to be *the foundation of all the rest*."

3d. "Such *primary professions* ought chiefly to be encouraged, as will naturally support the *secondary* ones."

4th. "Agriculture is the foundation of every other art, business, or profession; it has therefore been the policy of every wise and prudent people to encourage it to the utmost."

5th. "Agriculture ought to flourish to the full cultivation" of the land in a nation "before what we commonly call *manufactures*, take place as articles of trade and commerce."

6th. "After cultivation is at its height, those manufactures ought first to be encouraged which work upon materials of our own growth, and *last of all*, those which employ foreign materials."

These I conceive to be rules for *independent* nations, but for a *subordinate* country, they admit of some variation.

7th. A nation limited in her commerce, cannot manufacture inexportable commodities to advantage.



8th. Until she has a redundant population, it must be repugnant to her interest to work upon such manufactures, even for her own consumption, because it is employing her people to considerable loss, even though the materials are her own; but when they are exotick, the injury is considerably increased.

9th. The maxim then for a nation so circumstanced, *unalterably* to pursue, is to adhere *strictly to agriculture*, and such manufactures *only*, as *she can export to large profit*.

These I conceive to be undeniable rules for the production of happiness and wealth to any nation, and at once lead me to the present inquiry.

The single object which has prevailed upon me to undertake it, I am sensible will excite surprize in the advocates for manufactures, and will probably enrage all those immediately interested--But indeed, it is with astonishment I behold the feverish zeal of the publick in behalf of what they call manufactures.

I am inclined to believe, nay, I am sure, that many of the persons who espouse this cause, do it from a conviction, that it is for the benefit of the kingdom; but I am no less convinced, that the bulk of the people who appear in the throng, are warped by other causes: One set is courting vulgar popularity, and the others are interested in the event—A double influence upon the minds of men, which ever hurries them into zeal of a dangerous tendency, be the object what it may; and often, like the rapid flood that carries all before it, bears down in silence, men of discerning judgment, and whose cool and dispassionate



nate reflections, are more important and interesting to the happiness of the people.

This is the subject, which at this time monopolizes the publick attention : I propose to examine the utility of the measure, not in that extensive manner it admits of, but only in a few particulars — It appears to me a subject, pregnant with such unhappy consequences to our well being, as to claim your most serious consideration — Whether, what I propose to offer, shall have any weight, can only be submitted to your judgment.

Charitable motives are now the grand foundation, upon which all the present zeal for manufactures seems to be built — It is a laudable spirit, and I will contribute my mite. — Whether the distresses of the manufacturers are as great as they are represented to be, is not in my power to determine, and therefore I shall take them as they are represented ; if they are magnified, it has been to answer some purpose, either malicious or lucrative — but I do conceive, that the more *real* their distresses are, the more that *reality* will prove the zeal for manufactures, to be diametrically opposite to the true interest of the nation.

To illustrate this, it seems worthy of enquiry, whence these crying distresses have arisen — I know the fashionable reply will be, from the repeated prorogations of parliament, absentees, and the importation of foreign manufactures — Upon a superficial view, these reasons strike the imagination with conviction ; and to avoid tedious arguments, suppose we admit these causes to have contributed as largely as the manufacturers would have us believe, or wholly, if they please — yet, I

think it will not be difficult to shew, that the foundation thereof springs originally from another cause ——— viz. that this cannot be a manufacturing country; I mean of silken and woollen goods—— And I think the present distresses of the manufactures is a strong testimony of it; for where the manufactures of any country are so feeble, as to send 27,000 workmen a begging (as is asserted) by such an event, as the prorogation of a national assembly, a few months earlier than usual, it demonstrates I think, that such manufactures stand upon a ticklish foundation; and any fabrick that has so little stability, as to be torn to pieces by every gust of wind, can have no permanence in itself, and consequently can afford none to a nation, and therefore, are not the pursuits for this country. ——— And the present distresses certainly prove that these manufactures are over done; that is, that too many people are bred manufacturers of fabricks which we cannot *consume*, and what is much worse, which we *cannot export*. Hence it seems to be a query, worthy of your consideration, whether the publick encouragement which has been given for some years past, has not increased the mischief: that is, whether the £20,000 (or thereabouts) which have been given to the silken and woollen manufactures, have not invited more people to apprentice their children to those callings, than would otherwise have done so, had no other encouragement been given, than the internal demand. — If upon mature reflection, you should resolve in the affirmative, you will consider whether it will not be consistent with your wisdom, and the happiness of the nation, to withhold any further encouragement to pursuits so productive of distress to thousands of individuals, and therefore injurious in an infinite degree, to the people you represent.

Let



Let Gentlemen reflect a moment. — *Twenty seven thousand* manufacturers of silk and woollen goods are said to be sent a begging, (the master manufacturers tell us so.) By the mistaken zeal then for manufactures which we cannot sell (for consuming at home is not selling) we have 27000 men to support by charity. — A pretty tale for the master manufacturers to tell, to gull the publick. — But let us trace the evil only in this light. — If we suppose each man, one with another, to have a wife, and only two children, in that case, the number of paupers at once thrown upon the publick, amount to 108,000. \* — If we are not imposed upon in our first number, and that our supposition be true (though I hope the contrary) this is a consideration shocking to humanity, and truly alarming to a nation; and in my mind, is a strong illustration, that these manufactures are repugnant to the interest of the kingdom.

But let us examine the point comparatively. — The linen is our staple manufacture — I would be glad to know whether the prorogation, the absentees, or any other of the causes which are said to have so much affected the silken and woollen manufactures, as to have thrown 108000 people upon the publick, have sent any, and what number of linen manufacturers a begging? I suppose not a man, woman, or child. How many have the causes urged for the present distresses, thrown upon the benevolent publick, of ploughmen, and country labourers? I conclude not one, we have full employment for them all.

By this contrast may we not conclude, that the distresses which the manufacturers are now labouring under, do not arise from the causes so strongly urged by many, but spring originally from the pur-

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suit of such manufactures, being a wrong measure for this country?—And I think it is clear, that the manufacture, or manufactures, which, from any publick inconvenience of less magnitude, than internal war or pestilence, shall send 108000 souls a begging in one city, in the course of a few months, are indisputably, highly *injurious to the nation*. — So far, Gentlemen, as to the causes of the present distress. — I shall now examine, how these manufactures affect the nation, in view to population.

Perhaps it will be urged, that multiplying our manufacturers by 4, and thereby making the paupers 108,000, is too large an addition to our unhappy stock of 27000 manufacturers now idle.

Whoever should offer such an objection, little imagines how strong a proof it would be of the folly of pursuing these manufactures, whilst the real happiness and interest of the nation is kept in sight: to contribute to which, *POPULATION* is one of the grand pillars of strength. — In relation to that object, let us examine the difference.

If the 27000 manufacturers now said to be idle, had been bred ploughmen, or country labourers, no man I think will say, that I rate the population high, in supposing each man one with another to have a wife and four children; this would make our multiplicator 6 instead of 4, and consequently our number of souls, which would be *now* employed, and candidates for employment, would be 162,000. — Such I conceive to be the difference in population, between the sober and regular employment of a country life, and that of an idle

idle drunken manufacturer, crouded in a garret or a cellar in a great city. Let us compare this important object accurately.

27,000	Country labourers inclusive, and		
	their population	— —	162,000
27,000	City manufacturers inclusive, and		
	their population	— —	108,000
			— — — —
			54000
			— — — —

Country labourers upon a stock of 27000, superior to city manufacturers in population, by 54000 souls.

This difference may not be mathematically exact, but I think we may pretty safely pronounce, that upon a stock of 27000 men, their population would be *fifty thousand* less in a great city, than in the country; and therefore I think the following conclusions are natural and undeniable.

That by breeding the 27000 manufacturers *now idle*, to manufactures which we cannot vend, and consequently cannot support, we have lost *Fifty Thousand Souls*.

*That manufactures which will not constantly support the people bred to them, are worthless pursuits.*

*And that they ultimately tend to impoverish the nation.*

Were I not afraid of being tedious, I should pursue the enquiry upon the point of comparative population, between the manufactures in question, and husbandry, and its consequences, upon a large and extensive scale; but to avoid that, I shall briefly observe, that the extravagance, voluntary,



voluntary, and now, unavoidable idleness of the manufacturer, renders him a citizen of much less importance to the community, than the country labourer, and that more particularly, when he works upon foreign materials not exportable; because in his fabrick he does not create any thing for the nation, whereas, the ploughman is every day creating, and because, as hath already appeared, by him, (the manufacturer) the generation of the human species, is not, nor cannot be so prolifick. — Let us examine this point with more accuracy.

Various are the methods which political arithmeticians have taken to value the people of different nations; and some have gone so high, as to value each person at a principal of £300 sterling. I shall not trouble you with any opinion upon this valuation; and to avoid all possibility of objection, I shall rate them much lower.

We have seen, that by breeding the 27000 manufacturers now idle, to occupations which will not support them, that we have suffered in population upon that number *only* — 54000! How much *more* we may have suffered by those manufacturers which *are* in employment, no judgment can be formed, until we know how many people in all we have employed therein; we can therefore only calculate upon the injury it appears the nation has sustained.

Of the 54000 souls which we might have had more, if the 27000 manufacturers now idle had been bred to husbandry, I shall suppose half of them males, and the other half females. That I may not be thought fond of magnifying the miseries which these manufactures bring upon us, suppose  
we



we value the labour of each man at *four shillings* a week, upon an average through the kingdom—— That will be £10 8s. per annum. The females we might I think value at *three shillings* a week, when we consider what they can do, and keep in sight their importance to every community with a view to population; but that I may not be thought to over value their labour, I shall suppose it only *two shillings* a week; that is £5 4s. per annum. And still, to make further allowances, I will strike off the 8s from the men, and the 4s from the women. In that case, every man will be worth to the nation £10 per annum, and every woman £5.

The question then is, what the purchase of these peoples lives would be worth to the nation? — Considering them as residing and labouring in the country, no one will imagine I hope, that I over-rate them at *ten years* purchase——£10 per an. the earning of a man, and £5 that of a woman, make £15 per an. for each pair. — Our average earning then per head, will be £7 10s. which being multiplied by 10 (years) amounts to £75, the value of each person to the nation.

The 54,000 souls then, which we have lost by the 27000 manufacturers now said to be idle (no matter whether they are or not in this examination of the point) must be multiplied by 75, in order to come at the *real loss* we have sustained in population upon 27000 of *these manufacturers*. — Will it not appear astonishing to find it amounts to no less than FOUR MILLIONS, and FIFTY THOUSAND POUNDS Sterling?

Here is the glorious advantage we have by our rage for these manufactures. — Here is the glorious

rious wisdom in a nation between *properly* and *improperly* employing her people! — May we not hence pronounce, that the manufactures in question, are repugnant to the interest of this kingdom?

But let us examine them a little. — It is said, that *one thousand* looms are stopped in this city, and that each loom used to employ *twenty seven* hands, which make up the 27,000 manufacturers, now said to be starving for want of employment. — For my part, I know nothing of these facts, I only take them as the master-manufacturers represent them — if they have overstrained the matter, be it with them; and I hope I do not deceive myself in not believing their report — But if their assertions be true, in my opinion, it is the strongest proof that can be, that their manufactures are not only worthless, but infinitely injurious to the nation.

Of these *thousand* looms, I shall suppose only *five hundred* of them to be for silk — though I fear, if a *thousand* are stopped, and we could gain true information (which indeed I much despair of in any particulars relating to these affairs) we should find many more of them for fabricating that article, than the number I have mentioned; because, by the very large encouragement given to the woollen lately, that branch I understand is moved into the country. However, I shall suppose only *five hundred* silken looms now at a stand, and from our information, that 13500 manufacturers of silk are now idle thereby.

These manufacturers with their families, are thrown upon the humanity of the publick — I hope they will get relief, because a generous mistaken



taken zeal, has led them into an art, which the nation cannot support, of which their distress is a demonstration. — But let us examine how the nation is affected by this event, which I cannot call less than unfortunate.

The end and purpose of manufactures I apprehend, are to enrich a nation, by obtaining a better price for the labour of her people, at the expence of other nations, than her own internal labour will or ought to afford. — But that cannot be the object of *Ireland*, as to the manufactures in question, because we cannot sell either silk or woollen. But the argument is, that if we can manufacture such goods ourselves, we save so much of the first cost, as the manufacturing comes to. — This is certainly plausible — but it is superficial — however, I shall let it pass for the present, because it leads me at once to a material part of my enquiry.

If by manufacturing silk (woollen I shall speak to hereafter) for our own consumption we save the expence of manufacturing, it would be a pleasing circumstance to know accurately, how much that amounts to, and what are the wages of the manufacturers per week; provided, when they may have full employment, they would stick to their work. — This is a matter which I have a difficulty about; however, I presume, we may safely suppose a silk manufacturer to earn *ten* shillings a week, when he *can* have full employment, and *will mind his business*. — From so great a shock as this manufacture is now said to labour under from being over handed, I think we may safely reckon it will be three months before it can be reinstated, even by the utmost zeal of the publick.

Upon



Upon these suppositions then, we shall be able to form some judgment of the loss the nation will sustain, *immediately in the labouring part of the manufacture*, by its being *over banded*, 13500 manufacturers *above the consumption of the kingdom*.—13500 manufacturers at *ten shillings* a week, amount to £6750.—This sum being multiplied by 12, (weeks) makes the formidable sum of £81,000. — This I presume is pretty near the sum we shall lose, if we are rightly informed as to the number of manufacturers now idle. — But I hope it will be observed, that this calculation is expressly made upon a presumption, that when the manufacturers *can* have work, they *will* attend it closely. — A supposition, which I conceive to be as far from truth, as that the silk manufacture will be advantageous to Ireland; for, it is the general practice of this kind of people, to earn about half the wages they might earn; so prone are they to idleness and dissipation.

If this observation (which has been made by an hundred political writers, and experienced by every master-manufacturer in *England and Ireland*) shall be admitted to be true, I should be glad to know wherein the earning of a silk manufacturer is preferable to that of a linen manufacturer, or a country labourer? — The impossibility of answering this question, shews how fallacious are the expectations of wealth to this kingdom by the silk manufacture — For the point of profit to the nation, rests not upon what they *might* earn, could our own consumption employ them all; but the question is, what *do they earn*? — and if they do not earn what they ought, the end is not answered. — 13500 of these, and as many woollen manufacturers are now said, to *earn nothing*, because the demand affords them nothing to do — The distress is therefore, not from a loss of  
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of trade, because we never had, nor ever can have it, but from our internal and precarious consumption, being insufficient to employ the people bred to a fabrick, abounding with injuries to the nation.

To shew some of those injuries in a yet clearer light, let us compare it with the same number of linen manufacturers, for the three months which it has been supposed the 13500 *redundant* silk manufacturers will remain idle.—In this comparison I shall suppose a linen manufacturer to earn only *six* shillings a week ; and his *smaller* earning, *larger* family, and *country* residence, will make him attend closer to his business than the former.

13500 Silk manufacturers idle from necessity three months at 10 s. a week.	£ 81,000
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13500 Linen manufacturers employed for the said three months, at 6 s. a week	48,600
	<hr/>
	£ 129,600
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Surely no man will deny, that the linen manufacture, upon our given number of men, is preferable to the filken, for the supposed three months, by the above total of £129,600, if, upon the same principles that the silk manufacture is espoused, it will be admitted, that to save, is to gain.—But let us examine this point a little further.—The linen manufacture is happily carried on in the country, and therefore, with the people employed therein, I consider the population the same as with the country labourer.—This being examined,

examined, will mightily swell the account.—The women earn about *six pence* a day at spinning linen yarn, the eldest daughter (besides a little domestick business) perhaps *four pence* a day at the same; and the eldest son eight pence a day at weaving—I might charge six pence a day more for the other two children, but to make ample allowances for the mother's attendance to domestick affairs, I shall not charge any thing for the labour of the two youngest children.—Our account then will stand as follows.

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
13500 Linen manufacturers at 6 s. a week for 3 months		48600	0 0
13500 Women, wives of do. spinning at 3 s. a week do.		24300	0 0
13500 Sons of do. weaving, at 4 s. a week do.		32400	0 0
13500 Daughters of do. spinning, at 2 s. a week do.		16200	0 0
		<hr/>	<hr/>
	£	121500	0 0
13500 Silk manufacturers, loss to the nation, their labour for 3 months at 10 s. a week, they being redundant or supernumerary hands.		81000	0 0
		<hr/>	<hr/>
	£	202500	0 0
		<hr/>	<hr/>

If these suppositions, upon the earnings of the same number of people in the linen manufacture are true, may we not pronounce that the linen trade, only in the article of labour, for three months, in the present period, is superior to the silk manufacture,



*manufacture*, by *above* TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS ?

Perhaps it may be urged by the advocates for the manufacture of silk, that I have greatly exaggerated this account.—I am not of that opinion.—However, I have left enough to make up for any reasonable deductions that they can possibly make ; because, in this view of the two objects, we have a right to add against the silk, the deficient population amongst the silk manufacturers now said to be idle, which we have already seen may be reasonably calculated at TWO MILLIONS *sterling*. But without the valuation upon lives, let us only value the *labour* of the children, which I think it is clear the linen manufacture would produce, and part of the work of the wife, every one of which can, or soon will learn to do something in the linen way—this strikes me as being very considerable, whereas, but few can or will earn any thing in the silk—those not born, certainly cannot—so that, without entering into particulars, I think I have left at least £70,000 to answer any deductions which ingenious casuists may propose. — At the same time, I profess not to offer the account as accurate, because I do not know the wages of a silk manufacturer, nor of a linen one : but I have put the latter low to avoid objections, and if the silk weaver is not put high enough, it would make for my argument.

In stating the silk manufacturer at *four* shillings a week more than the linen, the friends of that manufacture may urge it to be preferable, because I confessedly state the labour higher. But surely, that can be no advantage, since we see it to be a melancholy truth, that the internal consumption of silken goods will not give employment to the  
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people bred to that manufacture. Besides, the price of labour upon that manufacture, or indeed any other, is not the inquiry interesting to *Ireland*. —The questions important to her, are

1st. *Which manufacture affords constant and regular employment to the people?*

2d. *Which affords her most profit?*

3d. *And, which contributes most to population?*

The *first* question, no man will answer by saying *silks*, because we are told the manufacturers now want employment by *thousands*, and *ten thousands*.

The *third* question cannot be answered either by *silks*, because it has been already shewn to injure population, to the value of *two millions sterling*.

Let us examine the *second* question, and we shall find the *silks* affords *no profit at all*, but *constant loss*.

It is said, that the raw silk which we import, after being manufactured, advances in value about  $32\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.—So that in fact, we give £100 to foreigners, in order to save £32 10s. by labour. —The loss then is clearly £67 10s.—To this might be added the loss in population, the frequent combinations of the mechanicks, their weekly voluntary idleness, and their unavoidable idleness in the present period. These articles would prodigiously swell the injuries the silk manufacture is productive of to the nation; but I will not multiply the sorrows of my country; *sixty seven and an half per cent loss* upon any manufacture, is a lesson sufficiently striking to shew the error of pursuing it;



it; and seems to call for your interposition and authority.

Our linen trade (so I call it, because we can and do export it in abundance, but silk not a yard) I understand is become so extensive, that we are obliged to import some flax, and much seed, which, together, as I am informed, amounts to about 5 per cent. upon the linens exported.—Whether these informations are accurately true or not, I cannot tell, neither is it very material to the present point, since the difference cannot be much.—Upon this state of the case, the linen manufacture affords the nation a clear profit of £95 in every hundred pounds worth of linen exported.

Now, if we add the constant loss upon the silk manufacture, (which is certainly right) to the regular profit upon the linen, the two sums will make £162 10s.—Surely then it is clear, that the linen manufacture is preferable to the silk by that sum—because the linen brings *into* the nation £95, whilst the silk carries *out* £67 10s. both upon a fair balance.

With me, this comparison is conclusive; and confirms me in opinion, that the silk manufacture is a business *we* ought to have nothing to do with.—But when I recur to the idleness, dissipation, and poverty it is productive of, the check it gives to population, and withdrawing the hands from works really valuable and interesting to the kingdom, I cannot sufficiently express my astonishment, that it gains one advocate.—But when I reflect on the many thousands of pounds which have been given to its support within a few years, as we now see, to no purpose, unless to promote its



decline, I must give it a new name, and henceforth, call it the

### MANUFACTURE OF FOLLY,

since, any manufacture, that requires a constant bounty to support it, is a folly, *prima facie*.

I am not unmindful, that the argument in support of this manufacture is, that if we did not manufacture the silk, it would be imported from other countries ready fabricated to our hands.—I do admit the *assertion* to be true, and I am sorry for it, but I deny its being an *argument*; at least, of any weight; for I think, if Gentlemen consider what has been already offered, it is pretty clear, that by the voluntary and unavoidable idleness of the working manufacturers, the injury the nation sustains, by their lives being spent in an art unprofitable, instead of agriculture, which affords a *clear gain*, or the linen, which is exportable, and almost all *clear profit*, and the check which their situation and dissolute lives give to population, *our home made silks stand the nation in very considerably more, than those imported ready wrought to our hands*, (as I shall most clearly shew in the conclusion) and therefore that the *ideal* œconomy of manufacturing is built upon mistaken principles.

But there are other objections.—Do the nobility and gentry purchase the *Irish* wrought silks?—Yes, in small quantities for undress, and now and then upon publick occasions.—But do they, or will they purchase them for their whole apparel?—No, they do not, nor will not.—Why?—Because the manufacturers have neither skill or integrity in fabricating them—because they are dearer than the foreign, not only in the price immediately paid,

paid, but as they are neither so good, nor do they wear so well, in either length of time or credit, to the wearer or manufacturer.—These are the complaints I hear in every company.—Under such a want of skill, or disingenuousness, how can any manufacture flourish? And under the immense losses it is carried on, how the nation is to support it, can only be submitted to the judgment of the guardians of the people.

For, from these premises, I cannot but conceive, that the *system* for encouraging the silk manufacture, is attended with an infinity of consequences, truly distressing and impoverishing to the nation; because, it is inviting the people to work upon an exotic material which is very costly; and when manufactured, we cannot export it.

And yet, the misfortune of our having so many people already bred to a business, which we see from the present distress, cannot support them, is a grievance (I hope only a temporary one) which we have brought upon ourselves, and claims some share of humanity; and therefore it seems worthy of those who can afford it, to consider of some means to set them to work——But this appears to require *extraordinary judgment*, for if the encouragement shall continue to be in the usual form, the distress will certainly not only continue, but increase, because the poor people will still be bringing their children up silk manufacturers, it being beyond their comprehension to discover the difference to the nation, between working upon an exotic material not exportable, and working upon an exportable one of our own.—Should this continue to be the case, there never can be a final end to their distresses; they must be periodical from the natural course of things, and as frequent



as famine threatened, nay, seized France, in the reign of Lewis the 14th, who, by his zeal for manufactures, left the kingdom to his successor, in a state of misery and ruin.

It may be said to be childish to describe an evil to a country, without proposing a remedy.—I do not think that is always to be expected.—We have *industriously* fought the present mischief, we have *courted* it, by *great liberality*.—We now SEE, we now FEEL the injury.—As the industrious bee extracts sweets from offensive flowers, so I hope we shall learn wisdom from our misfortune.—I cannot help thinking that the bounties which have been given for some years past have much contributed to our present distresses; the abatement of them may be one means of checking the growth of such sorrows as our city now groans with. And another effectual remedy would be, if it could be done, to prevent any more children being apprenticed to a business, which in every view, is so detrimental to the nation.—Upon the whole, if something effectual is not done, and that speedily, the natural and unavoidable consequence must be, that as the manufacture shall be overdone with hands, voluntary transportation must ensue.—May it not be said then, that we are *endeavouring to instruct* our people in an art, that *they may work in other nations*, and thereby *depopulate* our own?—I believe it not to be the intention, but the consequence is clear, it is natural in the course of things; for men, with their families will not starve in Ireland, whilst any other part of the world will give them employment.

The next manufacture which gains much attention, is the woollen; a very different object from that of silk, because, so far as relates to coarse cloths,



cloths, the *material is our own* ; but unhappily, *we cannot export the woollen cloths* — *These are two very important distinctions.*

Woollen cloth we must use in large quantities, because the nature of our climate renders such cloathing necessary to the people ; and therefore, as the wool is *our own produce*, it certainly behoves us to use all prudent endeavours to supply our own consumption.—But as the manufacture is limited, for want of an exportation, it strikes me as being a manufacture, requiring great caution, delicacy, and address, in our conduct of it ; because, if we overdo it, the undertakers must be hurt very sensibly, and the manufacturers must want employment, as they are said to do in the present moment, which, to use the words of (I think) Mr. Locke, “ is a real physical evil.” — Whence does this evil arise ? — It should seem, from there being too many people bred to the business ; for, if the internal demand is not sufficient to consume what is manufactured, certain it is, that there are *too many* people depending upon the manufacture. This, I think, clearly accounts for the present distress.

But why the consumption of this, our own manufacture is not greater amongst us than it is, seems to claim some attention. — Do the manufacturers make *any cloth* whatsoever equal to the English, at an equal price ? — I believe it is universally agreed that they do not. — What is the reason ? It must be, that they either do not understand the business so well as the English, (which indeed is hard to be expected, they being many centuries before us in it) or that there is a want of integrity in the master-manufacturers. — That the latter seems to have a large share in causing the

difference in quality and price between English and Irish cloths, is too manifest for the following reasons.—Our wool I suppose to be as good as the English, (some say better) a spirit is now raised in favour of our own manufactures, which perhaps, will last a few months—I say, for these reasons, I am told, *ratteens* are already risen, *three* and *five* shillings a yard; and wool I am informed is very low.—Can these manufacturers imagine that the public will submit to such imposition? Is it fit they should be treated so?—Is it not insolent to the judgment of mankind?—Is it not ungratefully treating a generous publick, whose feelings are touched, and whose humanity is moved to listen to their complaints, that by general consent, people of all ranks, are induced to purchase their fabricks? Are they not their own enemies?—Enemies to their country?—Besides, it is worthy of inquiry, to whom this advanced price will go.—The masters will not tell us, that they will give it to support the starving manufacturers; no, it will sink into their own pockets.—So the masters make a great noise about their starving workmen, move the compassion of the publick, then lay an extravagant tax upon their generosity, to enrich themselves, and counteract the publick benevolence!—a benevolence raised by them, under pretence of relieving their workmen and families now starving for want of employment, but ultimately calculated with great art, address, and clamour, to enable them to live more luxuriously than they do, many degrees beyond their rank and order in life, to their reproach amongst all sensible and industrious nations. When I hear of such palpable fraud and imposition, such a counter-acting of the generous and laudable feelings of a humane people, I own my indignation is excited, and I cease to  
give



give credit to a word they say, about their distresses, or any thing else.

But this is not all.— I am told, that since the present spirit has been excited in the publick to *serve our starving manufacturers*, that in this city, English cloths are splitting up the middle, and are sent to artists to be dressed as ratteens, in order to be sold as Irish; this we have been told by that wonderful source of intelligence, the *Freeman's Journal*. Though this may not be a fraud of much moment upon the individual purchaser, yet, it is a fraud upon the nation of the most heinous nature, it is a fraud upon the publick humanity, and it is a fraud upon the poor starving workmen, which none but callous oppressors could practise; and clearly shews, whether manufacturer, or retailer, what a set of people the publick zeal is in the hands of, and what a set, the *poor working manufacturer* has to depend upon.— They, poor creatures, are clearly made the foil, to answer the purposes, the private purposes of their oppressive and disingenuous employers.

And yet, mean and dishonourable as such people must be looked upon, the national object is the *woollen manufacture* — That should be promoted, be it carried on by whom it may.— But a *medium* should be observed, so as on no account to *overstock* the manufacture with hands, to which, I think it is clear, the large encouragement which has been given, has much contributed; and if 13500 manufacturers are now idle for want of employment, with me it amounts to a demonstration.— How the *medium* is to be come at is the difficulty. — If we have too many hands, as the present distress shews we have, premiums for manufacturing can only increase the mischief, unless such an enthusiasm can be raised in the people, as to wear



wear worse cloths, and pay more for them, than better will cost — But even that would only be temporary, because the manufacturers would still increase, until the demand would be again overdone, and we should have the same distresses trumpeting through the city, which we have now. — But such an enthusiastick spirit is not to be expected to prevail amongst any people, except for a few months; and therefore, I fear, the only means of *numbering our hands* to our *consumption*, is to withdraw all bounties, from such manufactures, wherein it is impossible, under our present restraints and other circumstances, we can ever hope to excel: this would be a means of preventing any more people being bred to the business for a time, and the internal consumption would itself shew, when more would be wanting, and thereby the *medium*, would be obtained. But we can never expect that *medium*, whilst one man can sweep away near £900 in one premium, and yet complain; and another, (after the most disingenuous attempts) obtain a conditional promise of £300.

As to the number of looms now idle, if, as it is asserted, they amount to *one thousand*, and that the division is right, which I have already made, of *five hundred* to the silk manufacture; *five hundred* remain for the woollen. — I own, I know not how to give credit to this representation; and yet, it is positively asserted. That there are a great many idle, I do believe, and by all that are idle, it proves that the manufacture is overdone, or in other words, that there are too many looms and workmen for our consumption; and I fear, ever will be so, until the manufacturers are more expert in the execution, and the masters *more faithful* in the fabrick; *that* and *that alone*, will induce the

the publick to make our own woollen manufacture, their general apparel.

If 13500 woollen manufacturers are starving for want of employment, the number is great, and were I to state their lost time in the manner I did before for the silk, it would only shew what has already appeared, that the zeal for any manufacture which we cannot export, is improperly placed; whereas, we have none of these complaints, of the linen manufacturers, or the people employed in husbandry; in those two branches, notwithstanding the publick distresses we hear of, and the excessive price of provisions, the people are all employed.

Wool at this time, affords a low price; even, though I suppose our sheep are diminished many thousands within two years past by the rot: a circumstance, which we might imagine would raise the price of wool; and yet, we find the contrary. This I own would appear strange, were there not some probable means of accounting for it.

Although we are so unhappy as not to have the liberty of transporting our woollen manufactures, yet, it would be much harder, if we could not vend our wool.——The wisdom of the mother country has seen, that if she did not purchase it, ways and means would be found to convey it to another nation, who have always gladly received it.——The last five or six years check to the trade of England with her Colonies, silk habits being wore in Ireland by more persons than used to wear them, before that manufacture was revived as it is called, and the prodigious spirit which has arisen in the French nation, (who certainly got much of our wool heretofore) seem to be the true causes



causes for the present cheapness of that article ; because, for the last ten years, they (the French) have not only given great attention to husbandry in every branch, but also by royal interposition, to the improvement of their breed of sheep, and particularly therein to their wool. Add to this, that the zeal for manufactures, is much abated in France, they having seen, they having experienced the folly of them. — So that whilst we are busying ourselves in the pursuit of trifles, and trifles too, which we cannot sell, in lieu of more substantial objects ; they, the French, are exerting their utmost efforts to agriculture and all its consequences, by which they must undoubtedly become a flourishing people, should not their present internal dissensions terminate unfavourably.

From what has been offered, may we not conclude, that any manufacture, working upon foreign materials, must be determinantal to the nation ? — And that any manufacture, which we cannot export, even though the materials are our own, requires to be conducted with great caution, to prevent too many people being bred to it, otherwise, they will certainly become a burthen upon the publick, or quit the kingdom, as the want of demand adequate to the hands, must create a want of work, — The present distress of 27000 manufacturers (no matter whether so many or not) verifies this observation ; and will confirm every thinking man in opinion, that there is no *stability* in the manufactures in question.

In the course of what has been said, the dissingenuousness of the manufacturers has been a little touched upon. I shall pursue that circumstance a little further. — I remember, before the premiums



miums commenced for the silk manufacture, that the silk weavers were represented to be in a starving condition. — The premium had not long subsisted, before the silk weavers *turned out* as it is called, for higher wages than the masters gave — What could be the reason I cannot tell — It *then* could not be for want of work. — Hence it is plain, that either the masters gave too little to the workmen, or, that the workmen wanted too much; one must be the case, so that either the masters or the men were in fault; and in either case, the publick were insulted and abused for their generosity — a generosity, which it now appears was unfortunate to the nation. — Premiums have been given every year for five years, to a very large amount, and now the workmen are said to be starving again for want of employment — Put them again in full work, *double, treble* the premium, and the same trick will the more probably be repeated.

A few years since, we had some expectations of gaining a little foreign trade for ready-made shoes, and I think, premiums were given by the Dublin Society to the exporters — Hence we were flattered with the hope of this becoming a branch of some little profit to the nation, since every pair of shoes that should be exported, would be a clear gain to the kingdom; but this hope was destroyed in its bud. The journeymen shoemakers *turned out* for wages, and the masters remained stiff for three weeks or a month, in so much, that the publick were in great distress for shoes, even, that several were under the necessity of sending to London for them, and still continue to do so, alledging, that they can be supplied sooner, cheaper, and better than in Dublin. — At length, terms  
were

were made, and the journeymens wages advanced *four pence* a pair upon mens shoes, and so in proportion for womens and childrens.—This was a tax upon the publick, which, although submitted to at home, might, and I believe has lost the little share of foreign trade we were in expectations of.—But the imposition did not stop here—— Because the journeymen raised their price *four pence* a pair for mens shoes, the masters very modestly, at once, raised the price upon the publick a *shilling* and *eighteen pence* a pair, which is from 200 to 350 per cent. upon the journeymens advance. Leather they have said was dear—— Raw hides are fallen *cent. per cent.* but I do not hear of shoes falling in price.—— Thus one example follows another, and mechanicks of almost every branch of business in their turns, form combinations for an advance of wages, merely I fear, that the earning of three days a week, may enable them to spend the other four in the alehouse.—— The masters in general make the publick pay pretty handsomely for it, and therefore it seems not very improbable, but they are concerned in the collusion.

We once had a trade to Portugal for camblets, and other stuffs; true, it was clandestine, but it was indulgently winked at—— It will not be said, that we have lost that by the *integrity* of our manufacturers in fabricating?—— No, it was by false package, &c. —— A gibbet would be too slight a punishment for such traitors to their country; and I wish we are not playing the same game in our staple manufacture—— If we are not, we are infamously scandalized.

That a disposition to idleness and drunkenness, does sometimes appear amongst the linen manufacturers, and husbandry labourers cannot be denied,



nied, but that they are so frequent, or that their combinations are so daring and avowed, as amongst the manufacturers and mechanicks in question, whose labour does not, nor cannot bring one shilling into the kingdom, I think no man will assert.

Whence then arise the present distresses of the manufacturers? is it not pretty plain, that a want of integrity in the masters, and industry in the workmen contributes much thereto? — That the publick bounties have increased the number of the latter, and consequently added to the evil? — And is it not as plain, that manufactures not exportable, must frequently be productive of distresses, similar to those now complained of! — What then must be the ultimate consequences in pursuing such manufactures? — Most surely, that in every complexion, they must be highly injurious to the nation.

That we have not a free exportation for every commodity which we can produce, is certainly a very mortifying consideration. — And yet, when we examine the matter, it will be found that we have the export of some articles of *real value*, and which would afford great wealth to the nation, did we pursue them with that spirit and attention which we ought to do, and which they truly deserve.

The capital articles not exportable, and which at present seem to monopolize the zealous attention of the publick are,

The Silk Manufacture.

The Woollen Manufacture.

Those Exportable are.

Linen. - - - - - Tallow.

Corn. - - - - - Wool.

Beef.



Beef.	—	—	Butter.
Pork.	—	—	Fish dried, &c.
Hides.	—	—	

These articles, circumstanced as *we are* I conceive, should reduce the attention of this kingdom to *two grand objects*.

AGRICULTURE and LINEN. *Fish* may be added.\*

The branches of agriculture are *tillage*, which comprehend *flax* and *flax seed*, *reclaiming waste-lands*, *feeding cattle*; and the *linen being exportable*, *stamps its own value to the kingdom*.

Let us turn the scale, and suppose that we had a free exportation of silk and woollen goods, instead of the produce of our land, and linen. Cool and dispassionate reason will surely see, that we should have much more reason to complain than we have now, because there could be no proportion in the profit. ——— England and France would ever be our competitors in the woollen, and the silk could afford but a small profit, because the material is foreign, and very costly; besides which, when could we hold any competition with the other two nations? — But, when we add another consideration to our present latitude, that the English have laid, not only a duty of 10 per cent. upon the importation of German linens, thereby opening their market to the Irish, but also an equal bounty upon the exportation of Irish and English linens†, surely, we should reflect upon those measures, as living testimonies of her paternal affection.

When I reflect upon these things, and compare what we have in our power, with what we have  
not

\* Considerable encouragement is given to our fisheries by the 3 Geo. III. † 29 Geo. II.

not——I am inclined to exhort my countrymen not to look at the blessings we *wish* to have, but to cherish those *we have*——Did we do that, we should soon be a rich and happy people, abounding in *plenty, wealth, and population*.——But to neglect the substance for the shadow, like the dog in the fable, betrays a peevishness of disposition, an instability of mind, which will ever keep us poor in purse, and thin of people,

That the pursuit of the manufactures in question is a shadow, a mere visionary prospect of wealth, will not be difficult to demonstrate, I think, to the conviction of all men of cool reflection; if it will be admitted, that to employ our people to perpetual loss, instead of immense gain, is to devote them to the pursuit of shadows.

It is positively asserted, that 27,000 manufacturers of sick and woollen goods are now starving for want of employment.——Nothing can be a stronger testimony of the false ground upon which these manufactures stand——But I will take the master manufacturers at their word—They have 27,000 men, to whom they cannot give employment.——To my present purpose, it matters not whether they can employ them or no, it is enough for me, that there are that number of journeymen manufacturers.

I will suppose these 27,000 men had been bred to husbandry, and that they were employed in reclaiming waste lands—that I may not be said to exaggerate the matter, I will only suppose each man to reclaim two acres in a year, in that case our number of men (now said to be starving for want of work) would reclaim 54,000 acres every year.——Suppose each acre, when reclaimed, to be worth  
D only



only *ten* shillings per ann. this employment of them would annually add to the rent roll of the kingdom, £. 27,000. Were we to add the produce of the land, as it should be reclaimed, conceive what an addition it would be, what a tide of wealth it would afford to the nation.—No man I think will assert, that the manufactures in question can come up to this, in their use of the 27,000 men, even though they could employ them.—But let us trace this part of our enquiry a little further.

I have already valued human lives at ten years purchase, which I hope will not be thought unreasonable, particularly when we consider them as residing in the country.—Our 27,000 manufacturers then, having been employed for ten years in reclaiming waste lands, would reclaim in that time *five hundred and forty thousand acres*, which, at ten shillings an acre rent, would amount to **TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY THOUSAND POUNDS** per ann.—Let us examine what the purchase of this land would be worth. I shall only value it at *twenty* years purchase—It is with astonishment that I see it amounts to no less than **FIVE MILLIONS AND FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS**. Will any man assert that the 27,000 manufacturers now idle, were they even in *constant* employment, could earn any thing like this in ten years?—Will any man assert, that all the silk and woollen manufacturers in the kingdom, with as many more to help them, and let them stick close to their work, and even export their fabricks; I say, even upon those terms, could they come within any share of affording such a creation of solid riches?—Were I to add from twenty shillings to five pounds an acre more for the annual produce to the nation of these improved lands, where would the manufacturers then



then be left? Where a snail would be, that should attempt to gallop with a racer.

Husbandry is slow for a little while in the commencement, but it is sure, and multiplies in profit, beyond any other pursuit in the world. — Of all others, it is therefore the employment for the people of this kingdom, which the above examination of the question demonstrates, I think, beyond all contradiction. — And if this does not speak to the understanding, if this does not shew that breeding our people to *manufactures not exportable*, is a measure diametrically opposite to the interest of this country, I know not what can be urged to facilitate the happiness of *Ireland*. — But let us yet examine the point a little further, and we shall find the loss much, yet, very much greater to the nation, by our rage for the manufactures in question.

I think it is about five years, since our bountiful encouragement to the silk manufacture commenced; and if I am rightly informed, in that time, about £.14000 have been given in premiums to it. — I choose to mention *that*, in this part of the enquiry, because, of *all* others, it is certainly the most repugnant to the interest of Ireland. — The premium has been, I believe, upon an average about *seven per cent*, by the different changes it has undergone. — If then we divide £.14000 by 7, our answer will be 2000, which being multiplied by 100, the value of manufactured silks in five years, will appear to be £.200,000. — It has been already mentioned, that the manufacturing amounts to about *thirty two and an half per cent*. — At that rate, the whole body of manufacturers have earned in labour *for the nation*, about £.48,750 in the said five years, which is about £.9750 per annum. By

subtraction of the five years earning from the total value of silk goods manufactured, we shall come pretty near the truth, I suppose, of the value of *raw silk* imported—the balance is £151,250—This sum then has gone out of the kingdom in *five* years for raw silk, which is £.30,250 per ann.—If we subtract the annual earning from this, the balance against the nation upon the immediate manufacture, is £.20,500 per ann.—This is a losing game, *without bringing in the consequences*.—And for this, have been given in bounties, about £.14,000, which is per ann. £.2800. This must undoubtedly strike every *dispassionate* and *disinterested* man, as being *superlative*—excellence in calculation and political œconomy!—I do not offer these accounts as accurately corresponding with the facts, neither is mathematical exactness material. It exhibits truth enough to demonstrate, that the manufacture of silk is a wrong measure for Ireland.—

But now let us state a general account, from what has been offered in these sheets, and we shall see pretty clearly whether the manufactures in question, are not detrimental, immensely detrimental to the nation—and I shall only make my calculation upon the 27,000 manufacturers now said to be starving for want of employment.

To

l. s. d.

To a national loss in population of 54,000 souls, by breeding 27,000 men (now idle) to manufactures in a great city, at ten years purchase, as before stated, and at 75 *l.* per head

4,050,000 0 0

To 540,000 acres of waste land, which the 27,000 manufacturers (now said to be idle) might have reclaimed in ten years, had they been bred to husbandry, which, at 10 *s.* an acre rent, and at 20 years purchase, amount to

5,400,000 0 0

To three months labour lost to the nation, upon 27,000 men, now idle, which I might value at manufacturing wages, but I will only value them as country labourers at 4 *s.* a week

64800 0 0

To raw silk imported for ten years, at the rate of 30250 *l.* per ann. as appears on the other side

302500 0 0

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*£.* 9,817,300 0 0
 

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Deduct for the saving to the nation, by manufacturing silk for *ten* years, at 9750 *l.* per ann. as in Page 35

97500 0 0

Deduct for the woollen manufacture (I cannot pronounce upon this, because I cannot so easily come at the probable earning,) but I am as willing to say 20,000 *l.* per ann. as 10,000.

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200,000 0 0
 

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Total of manufacturers earning. *£.* 297500 0 0  
 Let



Let us state the comparison of improperly, and properly employing our 27,000 manufacturers. Then you will see, Gentlemen, the world will see whether our pursuits are right or wrong.

The general loss to the nation upon 27000 men being improperly employed, as just now stated.	£. 9,817,300
Earning of those 27,000 men as just stated.	297,500
Balance against the nation upon these manufactures.	£. 9,519,800

This surely speaks like thunder, because it shews, that by improperly employing the 27,000 manufacturers in question, the nation has lost NINE MILLIONS AND AN HALF which she might have gained, had this number of men been properly employed.—

This I think proves sufficiently, *that the manufactures in question are improper pursuits for this kingdom.*

*That the goods manufactured stand the nation in NINE MILLIONS more than they can be purchased for, ready manufactured.*

*That agriculture, the linen manufacture and the fisheries are the only objects which should gain the PRIMARY attention of this kingdom.*

*And that the true cause of the present distresses arise, from our people being improperly employed, and not from the causes alledged.*

Upon

Upon this conclusion of the question in hand, it is enough to make a man weep, enough to make the nation weep——but I shall check my feelings upon it, I shall forbear to express my sentiments, and submit the whole, to the judgment of the GUARDIANS OF THE PEOPLE.

If what has been offered shall meet with such a share of their attention, as to induce them to direct their bounties to the reclaiming waste-lands, and the general improvement of the kingdom, instead of pursuits which must eternally *check population, impoverish the nation*, and withdraw the hands from more *useful works* ; it will correspond with the charter of the respectable corporation they repose their confidence in ; must eventually *enrich the nation*, will give *spirit and vivacity* in execution to *landed improvement*, now in *languor*, and which is the *only source*, that can afford wealth and happiness to this poor country.

If these shall be the effects, the author of these reflections, will have the satisfaction of having contributed something, to the service of his country :—if not, his good intentions, and hearty wishes for its happiness, will be his only consolation.

F. I. N. I. S.





